Description:
This panel seeks to recover women's embodied knowledge and lived experience of the processes of pregnancy, childbirth, and newborn care by drawing on a range of sources, both canonical and nontraditional. The early modern period was a time of great diversity with regard to female experience of the birth process that depended upon geographical location, class status, and religious creed, among other factors. Yet, at the same time, the professionalization of medicine across early modern Europe worked to exclude female practitioners from medical practice in favor of male physicians. The experience of childbirth was the last area of medicine to remain in female hands. However, midwives and other female caregivers were often disparaged as superstitious and ineffective.

We investigate the experience not only of the female practitioners who carried out the birth process, but also of expectant and new mothers, as well as women who lost their lives or their fetuses. Although the exact level of maternal mortality is debated, birth was a time of both joy and great anxiety, as demonstrated by the fact that women purchased burial shrouds in preparation for lying-in, left mothers' legacies in the event of their death, and utilized magical charms and prayers in an attempt to invoke supernatural protection. We examine the ways in which women assisted one another in this precarious time. We will focus on three areas of female experience: medical care (in the form of recipes, healing prayers and letters of advice from one mother to another) and midwifery, preparations for the lying-in process, and breastfeeding and wetnursing, drawing on sources from Spain, England, the Netherlands, and France. The coordinators' interdisciplinary focus and geographic breadth will allow us to explore both commonalities and differences in approaches to pregnancy and birth, such as religious differences between Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish Europe.

Our organizers are interdisciplinary not only in geographical scope, but also in the materials they consider. We draw on primary sources from many literary genres, including drama, poetry, and fairy tales, as well as historical sources such as household and midwifery manuals, communal registers, letters, and maternal legacies. Our approaches intersect with a number of critical fields, including cultural studies, nonhuman studies, history of science, and material feminisms. This interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach will open up productive space for critical inquiry across academic departmental divides.

Organizers:
Emily Kuffner, College of Saint Benedict and Saint John’s University, Spanish, ekuffner@csbsju.edu
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Key questions
• Within the general trend towards a male-dominated and professionalized medical model across Europe, what strategies do some female-authored texts use to challenge early modern birth culture and re-appropriate authority over birth and postpartum choices?
• How do women work together to create networks and collaborate with one another in order to exercise greater agency over their experience? What hegemonic networks, if any, are they part of?
• How do women draw from different fields of knowledge such as herbal remedies, supernatural agency, religious traditions, legal strategies, and fictional narratives to transmit knowledge, and what kind of knowledge are they transmitting?
• How do women’s material preparations for childbirth and maternity reflect an attempt to exercise greater agency and to manage fear and apprehension? What narrative strategies do their (fictional and non-fictional) texts employ to preserve the maternal self, potentially beyond death?
• How do birth practices vary by geographical region and religious confession across Early Modern Europe?

Required readings:
• Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy, excerpts from three late seventeenth-century French fairy tales: "Babiole," "Princess Mayblossom" and "La Princesse Carpillon" (pages 3-8)
• Exerpts from Samuel Rowley's When You See Me, You Know Me (pg. 9-10)
• Elizabeth Jocelin, The Mother's Legacy to her Unborn Child (exerpt, pg. 11-13)
• Exerpt from the memoirs of Glikl of Hameln (pg. 14-16)
• communal records from Amsterdam and Hamburg (pg. 17)
• Introduction to midwife record-book from Groningen (Netherlands) (pg. 18)
• Catalina Clara Ramírez de Guzmán, “Romance a la preñez de una dama” [Romance to the Pregnancy of a Lady’] (pg. 19-20)
• Excerpts from Spanish household manuals (c. 17th century) (pg. 20-22)

Suggested additional readings:
• Marland, Hilary. The Art of Midwifery: Early Modern Midwives in Europe.
Babiole

"Babiole" tells the bizarre and endearing tale of a monkey raised into a princess at the French court. The title character is elegant and refined in every way but her physique, which does not hinder her as a very young creature moving among the human elite but does become a serious obstacle to her success in adult life. Rich with social commentary, this story was published in France in 1698 by the prolific writer Marie-Catherine le Jumel de Barneville, Comtesse d'Aulnoy (usually called "Madame d'Aulnoy"). For nearly two centuries d'Aulnoy's tales were enormously popular in English translations (the one that appears here dates to 1892), in adaptations for child readers, and as the basis for Christmas pantomimes. She is known today as the author who coined the term "conte de fées," which entered English as "fairy tale." Her stories can feel unexpectedly long and refreshingly complex to modern readers, but in their day they helped define what a fairy tale was: fantastical landscapes in which characters face social challenges, written as adult amusement and intellectual provocation. In this case, the character of Babiole seems to ask us, what is beauty worth? What does society do with people who embody social ideals on the inside but look different from the rest? These questions pose an ethical challenge, even today.

There was once a queen who had nothing left to wish for but to have children. She could talk of nothing else, and would constantly say that the Fairy Fanfreluche, who had been present at her birth, and who bore a grudge

Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy, "Babiole" (1698), translated by Miss Lee and Annie Macdonell, in The Fairy Tales of Madame d'Aulnoy, Newly Done into English (London: Lawrence and Bullen, 1892), 211-31.
against the queen, her mother, had flown into a rage, and had wished her
nothing but ill-luck.

One day, as she sat alone grieving by the fireside, she saw a little old
woman, no bigger than your hand, come down the chimney, riding on three
reeds. On her head was a branch of hawthorn; her gown was of flies' wings,
and two nutshells served for shoes. She rode through the air, sweeping three
times round the room, and then stopped in front of the queen. "For a long
time," she said, "you have been grumbling at me, saying I am to blame for
your misfortunes, and that I am responsible for all that happens to you. You
think, madam, that it is my fault you have no children. I come to announce
to you the birth of an infanta, but I warn you she will cost you many a tear." "Ah!
noble Fanferluche," exclaimed the queen, "do not deny me your pity and your
aid; I undertake to do everything in my power for you if you will promise
that the princess shall be a comfort to me and not a grief." "Fate is stronger
than I," replied the fairy. "All that I can do to prove my affection for you is
to give you this hawthorn. Fasten it to your daughter's head as soon as she is
born; it will protect her from many perils." And, giving her the hawthorn, she
vanished like a flash of lightning.

The queen remained sad and pondering. "What!" she said, "do I really
desire a daughter who is to cost me many sighs and tears? Should I not be
happier without her?" When the king, whom she dearly loved, was with her
her troubles seemed more bearable. Her child would soon be born, and in
preparation for the event she gave her attendants strict charge to fasten the
hawthorn on the princess's head directly she should come into the world. She
kept the branch in a golden box covered with diamonds, and valued it above
all her possessions.

At length the queen gave birth to the loveliest creature that ever was
seen. Without delay the hawthorn was fastened on her head, and at the
same instant, wonderful to relate! she turned into a little monkey, and
jumped and ran and capered about the room—a perfect monkey and no

mistake! At this metamorphosis all the ladies uttered horrible cries, and
the queen, more alarmed than any one, thought she should die of despair.
She ordered the flowers to be taken off the creature's head. With the
greatest difficulty the monkey was caught; but it was in vain that the fatal
flowers were removed. She was already a monkey, a confirmed monkey.
She could not suck nor do anything else like a child, and cared only about
nuts and chestnuts.

"Wicked Fanferluche!" exclaimed the queen, sorrowfully, "what have I
done that you should treat me so cruelly? What is to become of me? What a
disgrace for me, that all my subjects should think I have brought a monster
into the world! and how horrified the king will be at seeing such a child!"
With tears she entreated her ladies to advise her what to do in this serious
case. "Madam," said the oldest, "you must persuade the king that the prin-
cess is dead, and we must shut up this monkey in a box and cast it to the
bottom of the sea; it would be a terrible thing to keep an animal of this sort
any longer."

The queen had some scruple in making up her mind; but when she was
told that the king was coming into her room, she became so confused and
distressed that without further consideration she bid the lady-in-waiting do
what she liked with the monkey.

It was carried into another apartment and shut up in a box. One of the
queen's servants was ordered to throw it into the sea; and he at once set off
with it. Now was the princess in the greatest danger; for the man, seeing that
the box was beautiful, was very unwilling to throw it away. Sitting down by
the sea-shore, he took the monkey out of the box; and, not knowing it was his
sovereign, resolved to kill her. But while he held it in his hand a loud noise
startled him and made him turn his head. He saw an open chariot drawn by six
unicorns, glittering with gold and precious stones, and in front marched several
trumpeters. A queen in royal robes and with a crown on her head was seated on
cushions of cloth of gold, and held her four-year-old son on her knee.
Once upon a time there lived a king and a queen who had had several children born to them. But they all died, and the king and the queen were so sorry, so very sorry, that they could not be comforted. They were very rich, and the one thing they wanted was to have more children. It was five years since the queen’s last son had been born, and everybody thought she would not have any more, for she distressed herself so much in thinking of all the little princes who had been so pretty, and who were dead.

At last, however, the queen knew that another child was to be born to her, and all her thoughts, night and day, were of how to preserve the little creature’s life, or of the name it would be called by, or its clothes, or of the dolls and the playthings she would give it. A command was sent out, proclaimed by the sound of trumpets, and stuck up in all the public squares, that the best nurses should present themselves before the queen, for she wished to choose one for her infant. So they came from all the four corners of the earth, and there were none but nurses with their babies to be seen. One day then, when the queen was taking the air in a great forest, she sat down, and said to the king: “Sire, call all our nurses together and choose one, for our cows have not milk enough to provide for so many little children”. “Very well, my love,” said the king. “Come, and let all the nurses be called.” So they all came, one after the other, bowing with much respect before the queen. Then they stood up in a row, each with her back against a tree. After they had taken their places, and the king and queen had admired their fresh complexion, their
beautiful teeth, and their look of health and strength, a little wheelbarrow was seen coming up, pushed along by two ugly little dwarfs, and in it a hideous creature with crooked feet, her knees touching her chin, with a great hump on her back, squinting eyes, and skin as black as ink. In her arms she held a little monkey, which she was nursing, and she was speaking in a jargon they could not understand. She had also come to offer herself as nurse, but the queen drove her away, saying: "Be off, you great ugly thing. You are very ill-bred to come before me with your hideous face, and if you stay another minute I'll have you dragged off." So the sulky creature passed on, muttering aloud, and drawn along by her hideous little dwarfs she went and stuck herself in the hollow of a great tree, from where she could see everything.

The queen thought nothing more about her, and chose an excellent nurse. But as soon as she had named her choice, a horrible serpent, hidden under the grass, stung the nurse's foot, and she fell in a swoon. The queen, much distressed at this accident, cast her eyes on another. Immediately an eagle passed flying by, carrying a tortoise, which he let fall on the poor nurse's head, and broke it in pieces like a glass. The queen, still more distressed, called for a third nurse, who, in her great eagerness to come forward, struck against a bush with great thorns, and put out her eye. "Ah!" cried the queen. "We are indeed unfortunate to-day. I cannot choose a nurse without bringing some ill-luck upon her. I must leave the care of them to my doctor." As she was rising to return to the palace she heard a stifled laugh, and turning round, she saw behind her the wicked hunchback, looking like an ape as she sat with her little imp in the wheelbarrow. There she was, laughing at the whole company, and especially at the queen, who was so angry that she wished to go and beat her, feeling sure she was the cause of the evil chance that had happened to the nurses. But the hunchback, with three strokes of her wand, turned the dwarfs into winged griffins, the wheelbarrow into a chariot of fire, and they all flew away together into the air, uttering threats and horrible cries.

"Alas! my love, we are lost," said the king. "That was the Fairy Carabosse. The wicked creature has hated me ever since I was a little boy on account of a trick I played her, putting sulphur in her broth. Since that time she has been seeking to revenge herself on me." The queen began to cry. "If I had but known her name," she said; "I would have tried to make friends with her. But now I feel as if I should like to die." When the king saw her so distressed, he said: "Come, my love, let us think what we must do," and he gave her his arm to lean on, for she was still trembling from the fright Carabosse had given her. When the king and the queen were in their room they called their councillors, and shut the doors and windows so that nothing might be heard.
PRINCESS CARPILLON.

THERE was once an old king who consoled himself for a long widowhood by marrying a beautiful princess he dearly loved. He had a son by his first wife, hunchbacked and squint-eyed, who was extremely annoyed at his father's second marriage. "The position of an only son," he reasoned, "made me feared and loved; but if the young queen has children, my father, who can do as he likes with his kingdom, will not take into account that I am the eldest, and will disinherit me in their favour." He was ambitious, full of malice and dissimulation. But he did not allow his annoyance to be seen, and secretly consulted a fairy said to be the cleverest in the world.

Directly she saw him she divined his name, rank and errand. "Prince Hunchback," she said, for so he was named, "you are too late: the queen will have a son, and I will do nothing to prevent it; but if the boy dies or anything happens to him, I will take care that she does not have another." This promise comforted Hunchback a little. He implored the fairy not to forget, and determined to play his little brother some evil trick as soon as he should be born.

Accordingly after a short time a son was born to the queen, the handsomest child imaginable. It was noticed as an extraordinary thing that the figure of an arrow was imprinted on his arm. The queen loved her child so dearly that she wished to nurse him herself; at which Prince Hunchback was extremely annoyed, because a mother's vigilance is far greater than that of a nurse, and it is easier to deceive a nurse than a mother.

Hunchback, however, only sought to attain his end, and feigned a love for the queen and all affection for the little prince; at which the king was delighted. "I should never have believed," he said, "that my son possessed such a good
disposition, and if it continues I'll leave him a part of my kingdom." Such promises did not satisfy Hunchback, who wanted all or nothing. One evening he gave the queen some preserves which contained opium. She fell asleep, and the prince, who had hidden behind the tapestry, quietly took the little prince away, and put in his place a big cat well wrapped up so that the nurses might not discover the theft. The cat cried and the nurses rocked the cradle, but at last he made such strange sounds that they thought he was hungry. They awoke the queen, and she, still half asleep, thinking to hold her beloved babe, took him in her arms to feed him. But the wicked cat bit her. She uttered a loud cry, and looking down what must she have felt to see a cat's head instead of that of her son? Her grief was so great that she thought she should die at once. The noise, made by the queen's waiting-women, aroused the whole palace. The king seized his dressing-gown, and rushed to her apartments. The first thing he saw was the cat in the same cloth of gold wrappings that his son ordinarily wore. The cat had been thrown on the floor where he lay, uttering the strangest cries. The king, greatly alarmed, asked what it all meant, and was told that no one knew, but the little prince was nowhere to be found. They had searched for him high and low, and the queen was badly wounded. The king entered her room, and found her in indescribable distress, and not wishing to increase hers by his own, forced himself to try and console her.

Meanwhile Hunchback had given his brother to a man who was his confidant and partisan. "Take him to a distant forest," he said, "and leave him naked in the spot most exposed to wild beasts, that they may eat him, and he may never be heard of more. I would take him myself, so much I fear you will not do my commission properly, but I am bound to appear before the king. Go, then, and be sure that when I am king, I shall not prove ungrateful." With his own hands he put the child into a covered basket. As he had been accustomed to caress him, the infant already knew him, and smiled, but hard-hearted Hunchback was no more moved than a rock. He then went to the queen's room, half-dressed on account of his haste, as he explained. He rubbed his eyes like a man not yet awake, and when he learned the bad news of his step-mother's wound, and saw the cat, he uttered such sorrowful cries that he took as much consoling as if he had been really distressed. He seized the cat, and, with a ferocity natural to him, twisted its neck, saying he did so on account of the wound it had inflicted on the queen.

No one suspected him, although he was wicked enough; but he concealed his crime under pretended tears. The king and queen were therefore pleased with their infamous son, and commissioned him to send to all the fairies to try and find out what could have become of the child. Anxious to put an end to
armour, are alive again, crying Saint George for England, and mean shortly to conquer Rome. Marry, this is thought to be but a moral.

King. The ambassadors are coming; and hear, William, see that you be silent, when you see them here.

Will. I'll be wise and say little, I warrant thee, and therefore, till I see them come, I'll go talk with the queen. How dost thou, Jane? Sirrah Harry, she looks very big upon me, but I care not, an she bring thee a young prince: Will Summers mayhaps be his fool, when you two are both dead and rotten.


Will. I think so, Harry: thou hast pressed her often. I am sure this two years she has served under thy standard.

Qu. Jane. Good faith, my lord, I must entreat your grace, That, with your favour, I may leave the presence; I cannot stay to hear this embassage.

King. God's holy mother! Ladies, lead her to her chamber; Go bid the midwives and the nurses wait, Make wholesome fires and take her from the air. Now, Jane, God! bring me but a chopping boy, Be but a mother to a prince of Wales And a ninth Henry to the English crown, And thou mak'st full my hopes. Fair queen, adieu, And may heaven's helping hand our joys renew.

Comp. God make your majesty a happy mother! Dud. And help you in your weakest passions! With zealous prayer we all will invoke The powers divine for your delivery.

Qu. Jane. We thank ye all, and in fair interchange We'll pray for you. Now, on my humble knees, I take my leave of your high majesty: God send your highness long and happy reign, And bless this kingdom and your subjects' lives, And to your gracious heart all joy restore! I fear I never shall behold you more.

King. Do not think so, fair queen; go to thy bed, Let not my love be so discomforted.

Will. No, no, I warrant thee, Jane, make haste and dispatch this, that thou may'st have another against next Christmas.

King. Ladies, attend her! Countess of Salisbury! sister Mary!
With old Saint Denis,
And your maidenhead must lie at the stake.  [Exit.

King.  Ha, ha! The fool tells you true, my gentle sister.
But to our business: how fares my queen?
How fares my Jane? has she a son for me,
To raise again our kingdom’s sovereignty?

L. Mary. That yet rests doubtful, O my princely lord!
Your poor distressed queen lies weak and sick,
And be it son or daughter, dear she buys it,
Even with her dearest life, for one must die.
All woman’s help is past. Then, good my liege,
Resolve it quickly, if the queen shall live.
The child must die, or if it life receive,
You must your hapless queen of life bereave.

King. You pierce me with your news. Run, send for help,
Spend the revenues of my crown for aid,
To save the life of my beloved queen.
How happed, she is so ill attended on,
That we are put to this extremity,
To save the mother, or the child to die?

Count. Sol. I beseech your grace, resolve immediately.

King. Immediately, sayst thou? O, 'tis no quick resolve
Can give good verdict in so sad a choice:
To lose my queen, that is my sum of bliss,
More virtuous than a thousand kingdoms be;
And should I lose my son (if son it be)
That all my subjects so desire to see,
I lose the hope of this great monarchy.
What shall I do?

L. Mary.  Remember the queen, my lord.

King. I not forget her, sister. O poor soul!
But I forget thy pain and misery.
Go, let the child die, let the mother live,
Heaven’s powerful hand may more children give.
Away and comfort her with our reply,
Harry will have his queen, though thousands die.

[Exeunt ladies.

I know no issue of her princely womb:
Why then should I prefer’t before her life,
Whose death ends all my hopeful joys on earth?
God’s will be done, for sure it is his will,
For secret reasons to himself best known.
Perhaps he did mould forth a son for me
TO MY TRULY louing, and most dearly loued Husband,  
Tourell Jocelin.  

MINE owne deare loue, 
I no sooner conceiued an hope, that I should bee made a mother by thee, but with it entred the consideration of a mothers duty, and shortly after followed the apprehension of danger that might
The Letter

might prevent mee from executing that care I so exceedingly desired, I meane in religious training our Childe. And in truth death appearing in this shape, was doubly terrible unto mee. First, in respect of the painfulnesse of that kinde of death, and next of the losse my little one should haue in wanting mee.

But I thank God, these feares were cured with the remembrance that all things work together for the best to those that loue God, and a certain assurance that he will give me patience according to my pain.
Yet still I thought there was some good office I might do for my Childe more than onely to bring it forth (tho' it should please God to take me) when I considered our frailty, our apt inclinations to sin, the Devil's subtility, and the world's deceitfulness; against these how much desired I to admonish it? But still it came into my mind that death might deprive me of time, if I should neglect the present I knew not what to do; I thought of writing; but then mine owne weakness appeared so manifestly, that I was ashamed and durst not under-
discovered when I was in the ninth month with my son Joseph.

My mother had some business to transact with an advocate who lived in the Horse Market. She asked me to go with her. Although it was far from my house, and the time for evening prayers was approaching, it was the beginning of the month of Kislev,¹ I could not refuse her. I was in fine health then. We went together to the gentle quarter. Opposite the advocate’s house there lived a woman who sold medlars. I was always very fond of medlars and ate them with relish. I said to my mother, ‘Mumma, do not forget, when we come back, I want to buy some medlars.’ We went to the advocate and there accomplished our business. It was very late when we were finished and nearly night. We walked homewards and both of us forgot the medlars; I remembered them only when I got indoors. I felt sorry that I had not bought any and gave no further thought to them, just as one thinks of food one likes, but which is not immediately to hand. I went to sleep, feeling as well as usual, but after midnight, my pains commenced. The midwives were summoned and my son was born.

The news was immediately conveyed to my husband, who was overjoyed that he now had his father’s name. But I noticed that the women who were with me put their heads together and whispered among themselves. I wanted to know what was the matter and insisted that they must tell me. At length they informed me that the baby had brown spots over his head and body. They had to bring a candle to the bed so that I could see for myself. I saw that not only was he covered with spots but that he lay like a lump of clay, not moving an arm or leg, just as though, God forbid, his soul had departed. He would not suckle or open his mouth. My husband, too, saw this and was very much upset. This was on Wednesday night and the circumcision was to be celebrated on Thursday week.

There was no improvement during the week, and he grew weaker day by day. Sabbath came, we celebrated Shalom Zochor.² But still there was no improvement in the child. At the

¹ Either the end of November or the beginning of December.
² A feast on the first Sabbath evening after the birth of a son, in celebration of the event.
close of Sabbath, while my husband was reciting the Hab-dalah, I said to my mother who was with me, 'I beg you, send the shabbos-goya to me. I want to send her somewhere.' My mother enquired where to? I answered, 'I have been puzzling all the time why the baby should have these spots, and why he has grown so much weaker. I wonder whether the cause is that on the night I was brought to bed I had a longing for those medlars and did not have any? I want to send the woman to get me a few schilling's worth. I will squeeze a little into the baby's mouth. Perhaps God in His mercy will help, so that the child will get better.'

My mother was very cross with me and cried, 'You've always got such nonsense in your head! The weather is as bad as if heaven and earth were joining, and the woman won't want to go out in it. It is all a lot of foolishness.' But I persisted, 'My dear mother, do me but this favour. Send the woman. I will give her as much as she wants, as long as I get the medlars; otherwise my heart will not be at rest.' So we called the woman and sent her to get the medlars. It was a long distance. She ran all the way. It was wretched weather, not fit to send a dog out in. The time passed very slowly until her return, as is natural when one waits impatiently for anything. Each second seemed as long as an hour. At length the woman returned with the medlars. Everyone knows that medlars, being sourish, are not food for such a young child. I called the nurse to unbind the baby and seat herself with him in front of the oven and squeeze a little of a medlar into his mouth. Although everyone laughed at what they called my foolishness, I insisted on this, and it had to be done. When she squeezed a little of the medlar between the baby's lips, he opened his little mouth so eagerly, as though he wanted to swallow it whole, and sucked away all the soft part. Before this he had not opened his mouth wide enough to take a drop of milk or sugar-pap such as one gives to babies. The nurse handed the child to me in bed, to see if he would suck. As soon as he felt the breast, he began to suck with the strength of a three-month babe, and from then till the day of his circumcision there remained no spot on his face or body,

1 A prayer recited at the close of the Sabbath.
2 A gentile woman employed in Jewish homes on the Sabbath to perform small duties forbidden by Jewish law.
save one on his side, as large as a broad lentil. The child was
fine grown and hale at the time of his circumcision. The cere-
mony was performed, praised be God, at the right time. There
was a great celebration on his initiation into the Jewish cove-
nant, the like of which Hamburg had not seen for a long time.
Though we lost 1000 marks banco the same day through the
bankruptcy of a Portuguese Jew Isaac Vas, my husband did
not take it to heart because of the joy he had in his son. So you
see, dear children, women’s longings are not all folly and
should not be despised.

After this I was again with child and very ill. When I was
in the seventh month I fell into an unnatural fever. In the
morning I was cold for four hours; after this I had four hours
of heat and—pardon me—sweated profusely, which was worse
than either the cold or the heat. This exhausted me. I could not
eat a bite, though the choicest dishes were put before me. Once,
on a beautiful summer’s day, my husband asked me to take a
little walk with him along the bank which was not far from the
house, to refresh myself a little, perhaps I would fancy some
food later. I said to him, ‘You know I have no strength for
walking.’ To which my dear husband made reply, ‘I and the
nurse will support you.’ I allowed myself to be persuaded and
was led to the bank where I seated myself on the green grass.
My husband meanwhile had ordered Todros, the cook of
Texeira,¹ to prepare a meal fit for the royal table while we
were out, and to call us home when all was ready. My husband
thought that when I returned and saw such a beautifully

¹ Texeira, a member of the Portuguese Jewish community in Hamburg,
was financial adviser to Queen Christina of Sweden in Hamburg. He
founded the Hamburg Bet Hamidrash, Jewish house of study.

In his interesting autobiography (trans. by Bernard Miall and published
by Unwin and Co., 1928) Johann Dietz, surgeon-barber, writes of the above-
named cook: ‘There was a rich Portuguese Jew in Hamburg, by name
Texeira, who visited my master almost daily . . . he often dined with my
master.

‘One day, when the cook had prepared a tench, with a yellow cream
sauce, as the Jew had enjoyed it exceedingly, he spoke to his own cook:
“You never give me anything as good as that.”’ The cook came to see our
cook and asked him how to prepare the dish in question, and informed his
master on returning that the fish was a tench. The Jew began to execrate
himself and to spit, for the Jews may not eat any fish without scales; how-
ever, the thing was done, and he was never again so trusting.’
Because we have found and seen that it is not sufficient to have only one doctor [responsible] to attend to the indigent of our city, it was resolved by the lay officials of our community, may it be protected¹, that two more doctors should assist him, so that the work should not become too onerous, as mentioned in this register on folio 544.

Furthermore, the women in labor (lit.: sitting on the birthing stool) must be treated with urgency. And given that it will be impossible to save multiple souls in one attempt – in this case both the parturient and the fetus – and [given] that it is not possible that two midwives can succeed in attending to all of them [the women in labor] as sometimes there are many, and this case is not similar to the case of physicians, who can treat patients rapidly, which is not the case of midwives who must wait with one parturient for a long duration. Therefore, we have appointed two more midwives [to join the other midwives], who are noted by their names:

Serkhe, the wife of Leib Wittsenhausen (already a midwife); Bela, the wife of Eli Kalker (already a midwife); Judith, the widow of the son of Jacob Aveh (new midwife); Haykhe, the wife of Joel Frank (new midwife).

And their [the new midwives’] salary will be a full salary in every way, just as the two extant midwives. Additionally, a list was given to each one so that they should know which streets they are responsible for (lit.: which paths they are obligated to go on). This same list can also be found in each and every synagogue, to inform everyone who requires the aforementioned midwives…

14 Tevet 5523 [December 30, 1762]

¹ This is a common honorific found after the Hebrew word kehilah, community, in early modern communal registers.
This is the book of the generations of man who have been born by my hands from the Jewish women. I, the midwife, came to them [to deliver] a son or daughter. And I took this book for myself [in order to] record in it the name of the parturient with the name of the newborn, and the date of birth. So that it will be for me and for them a memorial from this day forward that I began this work. I pray to God Almighty that He strengthen me and give me courage, and that He not make my hands weak while I am performing this work, and that there shall not be, Heaven forfend, any misfortune by my hands, both for the woman in labor and for the fetus about to be born. Only he [the fetus] should be expelled from the uterus like an egg from a hen.

These are [this book contains] the children of Israel who were born by my hands, and I have taken another book and there is listed, in the Dutch language, the names of those born by my hands from the gentile women here in Groningen.

Sunday, Rosh Hodesh Kislev 5555 [November 23, 1794]

I AM THE MIDWIFE Roza, the wife of Leizer son of Moses Judah

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Roza supplies an incorrect Gregorian date here: November 16, 1794. This may have been a result of calendrical inconsistencies that rendered her calculations different from those performed by modern tools.
Catalina Clara Ramírez de Guzmán, *Obra completa* (231-236) (English translation by Emily Kuffner)

CXV: Otro Romance a la preñez de una dama / Another Ballad, to the Rregnancy of a Lady (Selection)

Periquillo el de Valencia
que el del Cid puede llamarse,
por ti si te fortificas
entre panças y cuajares.
Escúchame, aunque estes preso
en el calaboço amable
que a un grillo escuchan, y tu
con grillos has de escucharme.
Y aunque a puras damerías
te tengo hecho un vinagre
la que te tiene, serás
capaz para que se halle.
Antes que sepas pedirlo
un consejo quiero darte
pues, colegial de los verdes
las ensaladas te hazen
Alas con tales alimentos
no desesperan coste pagues
que posesiones serán
saliendo postres cabales.
Ni la original dolencia
de viruelas te acobarde
que tu burlarás los ojos
que a otros sirven de enterrarle.
Ni temas la alferecía
aunque te alistes infante,
que a ti no se han de atrever
achaques de capitanes.
Sarampión, no lo esperes,
ni las lombrices aguardes
ni para echarte un embargo
ha de valerse de achaques.
Al mal de ojo, prevenido
en perfecciones tan grandes
querías ser el peregrino
porque romero te hallen.
Estáte alla nueve meses
sin romper el carcelaje
que perderás la señal
de la cruz si vienes antes.
Escarmienta en tus hermanos

Periquillo of Valencia
That may be called land of *El Cid*
because of you, if you strengthen yourself
between stomachs and curds
Listen to me, although you are imprisoned
in a happy jail
while they listen at the bars
you must listen to me attentively
And though with pure gentility
I made a vinegar for you
The one who has you inside,
you will make sure to find
Before you know how to ask for it
I wish to give you advice
since you will be a noviciate at *Los verdes*
Salads will make of you
a winged creature with such food.
worry not about costly foods
for possessions will result
that will outweigh the investment.
Nor should that ancient ailment
of smallpox cause you fear
for you will outwit the eyes
that have served to bury others.
Nor should you fear epilepsy
although it should recruit you as an infant
for the maladies of captains
will not dare to attack you
Measles, do not expect it,
nor be on the lookout for intestinal worms
nor will the onset of such ailments
serve to overwhelm you
As for the evil eye, prevented
by such great perfections
you shall wish to be a pilgrim
so much rosemary shall be found for you.
Stay there all nine months
without breaking from your imprisonment
for you shall lose the sign
of the cross if you come too soon.
Be chastened by your brothers
que son tan orates frates
que adrede se van al Limbo
por no dexar gobernarse
De vida es el alimento
en tan piadoso hospedaje,
y pues tienes buen arrimo
no anticipes el soltarle.
Pedro, serás, de Urdemalas
Periquillo, si a tu madre
siendo la perfeccion misma
nueve faltas le contaré.
Si en el mar de tu cabello
acedías se criases
aunque a vomitos provoque
yo sé que no ha de trocarte.
Dale un parabien a ella
cuando a los pies te arrojare
y viendo en buena hora,
lavorabuena a tu padre.
Para darla, en lo desnudo
que te hallarás, no repares,
que a fé que estes de buen pelo,
si en él no degenerases.

Para retener la criatura a las mugeres que mueben y es cossa muy preñada
(handwritten manuscript 2017, Biblioteca Nacional Española, transcribed and translated by Emily Kuffner)

haz un anillo de siete metales & nesta manera toma el plomo y derritelo y echale un poquito de azogue y hazese un cuerpo. Y toma limadura de hierro y hundelo en un crisol y de que veas que se haze como favaza a que se quiere hundir, echale un poquito de estaño y hazese un cuerpo y después toma el cobre y el oro y la plata y fundase con estos materiales y hagase de todo esto un anillo, y trayete en el dedo cualquiera y después toma de la boca de la hormiga y un grano de trigo antes que le caiga en el suelo y ponerlo en otro trapo colorado de lana y atarlo ha y colgarlo ha al pescuezo y detenerse ha la criatura hasta que para a su tiempo y mediante dios [E S] provado.

To retain the creature within women who have moved and are very pregnant

Make a ring of seven metals and in this way: take lead and melt it and add a bit of quicksilver and make a body. And take iron shavings and melt it in a crucible and when you see that it becomes soft and is on the point of collapsing in, add a bit of tin and make it as a body and after take copper and gold and silver and melt all these materials and make of all this a ring. And wear it on any finger and then take from the mouth of an ant a grain of wheat before it falls to the ground and put it in a colored wool cloth and you must tie it and hang it at the nape of your neck and it shall detain the creature until it is born at its time and if God is willing. Proven.
In orden que se ha de tener en criar niños:

Hablando con Juana de Herxera en la muerte del señor don Fernando que está en gloria en como fue ni mas ni menos que la del yfate me pareció avisara de algunos remedios que aca se tiene por muy buenos contra aquel mal y porque yo mesma los tengo experimentados y mis hijos que los crio todas de la manera que aquí dire a v. s. y dios sea loado y que agora se crie esta dios la guarde la mas bonica cosa del mundo por esto me atreo a dezir a v.s. que mande criar así al señor don Enrique y vera como plaziendo nuestro señor se cría sano y bueno

Lo primero que su ama no almuerze ni merienda carne sino cosas muy livianas como son pasas o una naranja dulce o una granada o cosas desta calidad si beve bino no se lo quiten pero a de ser muy aguado y no lo nega sino a comer y a cenar y mirenle que no se le engorde la leche que esta es la mas mala cosa que ay para este mal ay enbío a v.s. una poca de triaca de esmeraldas esta tenemos por cosa muy provada en todo estremo hacele de dar al señor don enrique dos vezes en la semana cada vez cantidad de media avellana y encima una poquita de agua a bever fria ansela de dar despues que estuviere rebuelto porque es muy mala cosa menear los niños despues de averles dado alguna medicina sino tenerlas quedos esta triaca es hecho con peonia de la que viene de roma porque la de acá no vale nada no enbío a v.s. la receta dello porque pienso que su boticario la sabrá hacer muy bien mas enbío de la misma peonia de Roma para que quando la haga le hechen della que son destos pedazos que van aqui porque quando se acabare esta le haga otra aqui bandos con pastos que les han de poer con una cinta que se le ha de poner en el pescuezo para que la traiga en la mano que escosa muy buena y mandara v.s. que le tenga miel rosada y colada para el verano hecha de miel y azucar, en el ynbierno de miel sola y desta le dara dos cucharadicas por la mañana cuando hobiere buen rato que no aya mamado y despues de dado ha de estar buen rato que no mame los dias han de hazer desta manera que un dia le dara triaca y otro dia nada y otro dia miel rosada y otro dia nada a se desta manera han de hazer todos los dias por orden si por natura el señor don Enrique no quisiere tomar la miel colada ovieren que no se haze provecho porque ay estomagos de niños que no lo quieren y entonces en lugar de miel rosada le dara dos cucharadas de hazeite de almendras fresco sacado de aquel dia con una gotica de agua de hazar dentro y un poquito de azucar piedra molido y ninguna noche se acuesten a dormir sino oviere fecho aquel dia camara porque sino la oviere hecho de suyo ponganle una mecha de alféñique o una oja de verza en la barriga como se usa y cada dia le den a veber en los dias de gran calor pruevenle dos otras vezes agua y por no dar pesadumbre a v.m. no digo mas.

The order in which children should be cared for: Speaking with Juana Herxera about the death of señor don Fernando who is in glory about how it was no more nor less than intestinal flu it seemed to me that I could tell her about some remedies that are regarded as very good here for that illness and because I myself have tried them and my children were brought up in the manner that I shall describe here and your excellency and God be praised they have been raised very healthy and well, pardon me this audacity and the intestinal flu that is seen now will be prevented by God the most beautiful thing in the world, which is why I make bold to say to your excellency that you order to have señor don Enrique raised in this way and you will see how if it pleases God he will be raised healthy and well.
Firstly, the wetnurse should not eat for lunch or dinner meat, but rather light things such as raisins or a sweet orange or a pomegranate or things of such quality, if she drinks wine do not deny her it but it must be well watered-down and do not deny her anything except to eat or dine and take care that the milk does not become fatty for that is the worst thing possible for this disease. Here I send to your mercy a bit of theriac of emeralds that we consider to be a very proven thing in the extreme, it must be given to señor don Enrique twice in a week each time a quantity as of half a hazelnut and then he must be given a bit of water to drink after he is turned because it is a very bad thing to move children about after they are given a medicine, but rather one must keep them still. This theriac is made with peonies of those that come from Rome because those from here are worthless. I do not send your grace the recipe because I think that your pharmacist will know how to make it well, yet I send you those same peonies from Rome so that when he makes it he can add those pieces which are here so that when it runs out I can make again a batch with pastilles that you can put on a ribbon which can be put on the nape of the neck or worn on the hand, it is a wonderful thing and I will send for your grace that you should have rose honey and spun honey for the summer made with sugar also and in winter honey alone and from this you should give him two spoonfuls in the morning when it has been some time since he has nursed and afterwards it should be considerable time until he nurses again. The days should be arranged as follows: that one day he be given theriac and the following day nothing and the next rose honey, and the following nothing and continue in that manner and order that if by his nature señor don Enrique does not wish to take the spun honey it will not benefit him because there are some children’s stomachs that do not desire it and then in place of rose honey he should be given two spoonfuls of almond oil freshly made that day with a drop of orange water in it and a bit of ground rock sugar and on no night should he be put to bed without having defecated because if he does not do so of his own accord give him a piece of sweetmeats or a leaf of collard greens in the stomach as is usual and each day give it to him to drink and on days of great heat give him water twice more and in order not to overburden you, I shall say no more.